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Merino Wool vs Wool: What's the Difference?

Posted on Mar 18, 2024

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When shopping around for natural, high-quality clothes and accessories, you may come across the option of choosing merino wool vs wool. What's the difference, and is one better than the other?

You may already know that wool is one of the best yarns for socks and other garments. But there are different types of wool from different breeds of sheep, and the resulting wool fibers offer their own unique characteristics.

Cozy up as we take a look at regular wool vs merino wool—and how the latter truly makes a difference when you wear it.

What Is Merino Wool?

Traditional wool comes from the fleece of sheep. There are more than 200 different breeds of sheep out there, though, and not all produce fleece coats that yield the best results for apparel.

"Merino" describes a group of sheep breeds that are renowned for their top-quality fleece and originated in Spain. These sheep were prized and protected by the Spanish as early as the 12th century. They've since been imported to places from Australia to the United States.

At Sockwell, we source our merino wool from ethical American farmers who raise the Rambouillet sheep breed, a type of merino. According to Oklahoma State University, Rambouillet ewes can produce fleeces weighing up to 18 pounds with fibers up to four inches long. That adds up to a lot of soft merino wool socks!

Benefits of Merino Wool vs Regular Wool

Is merino wool better than regular wool? If you're looking for the highest level of comfort, softness, durability, and performance, then merino wool clothing offers some clear advantages.

Finer Texture

Some people tend to associate wool clothing with a coarse, scratchy texture. But the fine fibers produced by merino sheep provide a luxurious softness that is often compared to cashmere. The thickness of wool fibers is measured in microns, and merino can range from the broader 24 microns to the rarer, ultrafine 11.5 microns.

Superior Performance

In addition to the superior texture and softness of merino vs wool from other breeds, there are a lot of performance benefits to this material. The merino wool fiber is known for its odor-resistant qualities, strength, and durability.

Greater Temperature and Moisture Control

Is merino wool warmer than regular wool? Not necessarily. Instead, it's much better at helping regulate body temperature in both warm and cool environments.

The fine fibers from merino sheep breeds offer unparalleled breathability and manage moisture very effectively, so you're never left feeling too clammy or hot. Traditional, coarse wool would feel warmer than merino wool in hot weather because it lacks these qualities.

Experience the Benefits of Merino Wool with Sockwell

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Merino wool strikes the perfect balance between practicality and luxury. The combination of the

above qualities makes it ideal for clothing you want to stay comfortable in all day long, like outdoor gear, base layers, and socks.

Explore our selection of USA-made merino wool socks and order yours today. As soon as you experience what it's like to wear merino wool garments, you won't look back!

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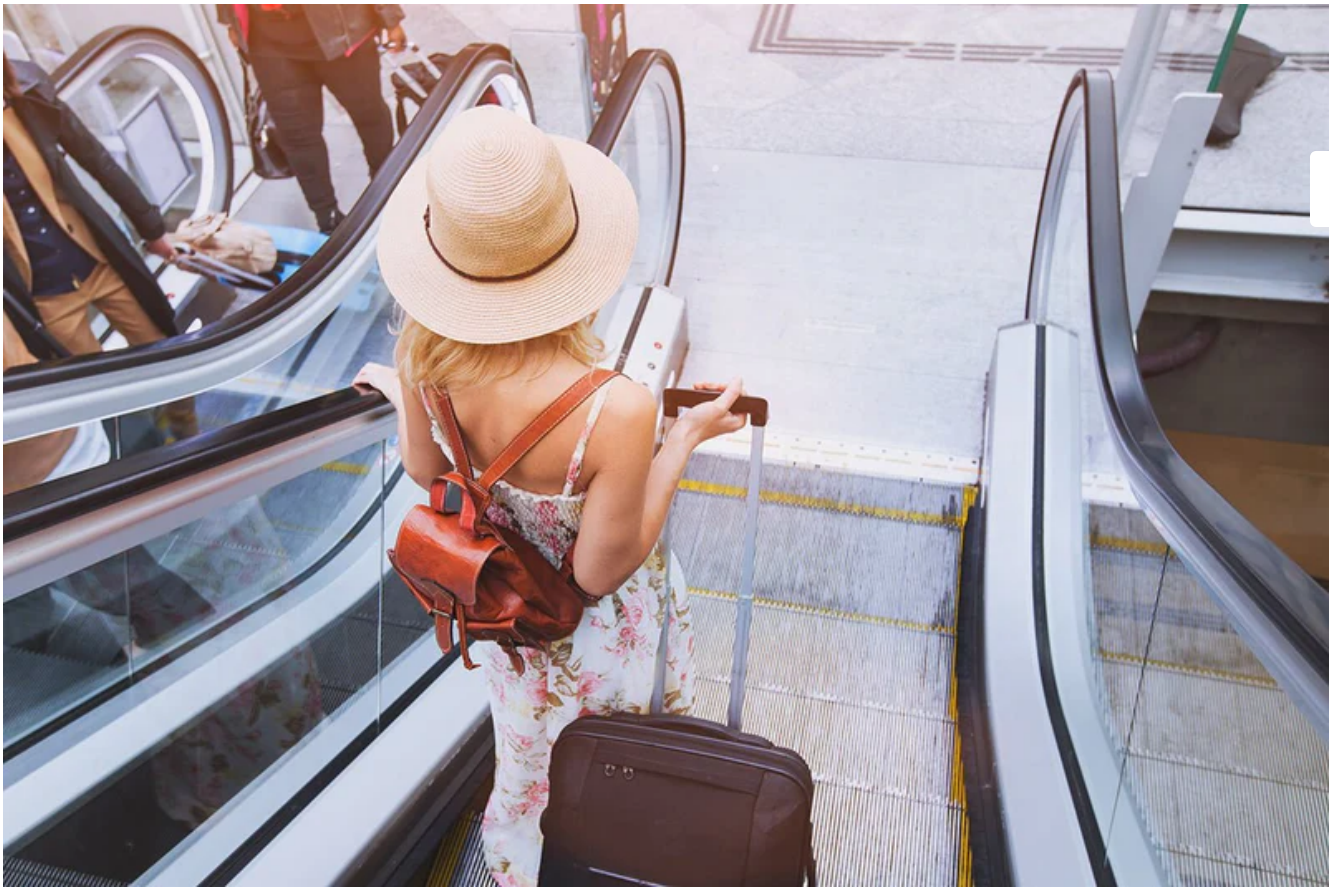

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